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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PRIMARIES AND PLATFORMS

WASHINGTON, D. C.

SIR,—I do not know whether you have as little respect for the general run of political platforms as I do, but I am inclined to think that our views cannot diverge very greatly in the consideration of these so-called declarations of principles. I have very little respect for them, because I know how they are made and how, under circumstances that make clear thinking and calm acting entirely impossible, suggestions are adopted and incorporated and henceforth are sacrosanct.

So much for an introduction. In view of the fact that it appears almost certain that hereafter all political candidates for office will be chosen in primaries, why should there be any convention and any platform? Isn't it a sort of handicap imposed after the race has been run? Isn't it a ridiculous anachronism?

My impression is that in England, where the parties are clearly and strongly divided, there is no such system as we have, and which, while it had some reason for being under the old system, has absolutely no excuse for existence now.

If we did not have a convention and a platform after the selection of candidates by the primary, we would escape many embarrassments and avoid much undesirable legislation.

At least, that is my opinion, and I hope that if you concur in that view you will let the world hear from you through *THE REVIEW* or any other medium of communication you may elect.

JAMES L. SLAYDEN.

[Undoubtedly there is point in the distinguished Texas Representative's observation; and yet, if platforms be abandoned, what will remain to "get in on" or subsequently to hide behind? It is a problem full of angles.—EDITOR.]

APPRECIATION

DES MOINES, IOWA, *April 9, 1914.*

SIR,—“We Appeal to the President,” in the April *NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW*, is so striking, so appealing to the good sense of the American people, that I congratulate you most heartily. I feel very deeply on this matter because of my knowledge of conditions in Mexico. In a series of letters to Iowa papers some weeks ago I urged, in a modest way, the same thought you have so ably presented. If you could reach all the people

of this republic with that appeal the pressure would be so strong that President Wilson would at least pause and take account of just where he is landing. This country is going ahead, rapidly and with force, into deep trouble with foreign nations if our policy toward Mexico is not changed. Humanity, at the same time, shudders at what is being done down there and not an effort made to stop it. A slaughter that could have been prevented if Mr. Wilson had not taken such a wrong stand at the start. Keep at it. The President must listen. The people are greatly wrought up over his Mexican policy and he must see his mistake.

C. C. PUGH.

CAMERON, ILLINOIS.

SIR,—I have been a regular reader and subscriber for THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW for a number of years, and I am writing to tell you how I enjoy it now more than ever before since your editorials have been published therein.

Your Appeal to the President, as renewed and emphasized in the current issue, is both noble and timely, and, it would seem, must almost surely be heeded.

However, I am not sure but that you do our President an injury when on page 500 you speak of his "course, which in common with everybody else he must know to be wrong."

I fully agree with you in your view of the situation, but surely if President Wilson did he would not lack the courage of his convictions?

Other editorials that I have greatly enjoyed were those relating to class legislation, the assault on classified service, the consular appointments, and the Pindell incident. I think as a patriotic—yes, proud—American citizen, I should say fully approved, rather than "greatly enjoyed," for surely these instances so clearly set forth are enough to make the most hardened partisan blush for shame.

A. A. OGDEN.

RURAL CREDIT

VINITA, OKLA., *April 9, 1914.*

SIR,—I have just read Mr. Van Courtland's article, "What Is Agricultural Credit?" in the April NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, and have been moved to express myself on a different phase of the same subject.

The majority report of the American Commission which was sent to Europe last summer to study the Rural Credit systems in operation in the different countries showed that the members were in favor of pushing the Rural Credit movement in America. There was, however, a minority which questioned whether our country was yet wholly prepared for such a step.

I was appointed by Governor Cruce to represent Oklahoma, and traveled with the Commission during the entire trip. We were treated with great courtesy and friendliness by the representatives of the different governments, and shown the best they had along the lines of our investigation. Naturally they would not show us the failures, and there are failures, although, as a whole, the co-operative movement in Europe has been a great success. This made some of us anxious to do a little investigating on our